i) mixing a sample of cells [possibly containing the analyte] with a cell lysis reagent to provide a lysed cellular sample;

ii) mixing the lysed cellular sample with [assay reagents, including] a specific binding partner of the analyte to perform a specific binding assay by forming a reaction mixture comprising a specific binding partner-analyte complex;

iii) mixing the lysed cellular sample with a cyclodextrin sequestrant for the cell lysis reagent, whereby the specific binding assay of step ii) is performed in the presence of the sequestrant; and

iv) detecting the presence of the specific binding partner-analyte complex the presence of which is indicative of the presence of the analyte in the sample.

Please cancel claim 3.

4. [Twice Amended] The method as claimed in claim 1 [3], wherein the amount of cyclodextrin sequestrant is in the range of 1 - 5% of the said reaction mixture.

14. [Amended] A kit, suitable for assaying for an analyte by the method as claimed in claim 17 [1] which method further comprises the step of separating bound tracer from unbound tracer , comprising: a detergent; a sequestrant for the detergent; a specific binding partner of the analyte; a tracer; and separation means for separating bound tracer from unbound tracer.

Please enter new claims 19 and 20.

19. A method as claimed in claim 1 further comprising the step of separating bound tracer from unbound tracer.

20. A kit suitable for assaying for an analyte by the method as claimed in claim 1, comprising a detergent, a cyclodextrin sequestrant for the detergent, and a specific binding partner for the analyte.